

# ADVENTURERS OF ENGLAND ON HUDSON BAY

WINNIPEG  
Provincial Normal School  
MANITOBA



G

Return this book on or before the latest date stamped below.

E-1-23

Grade 5

617

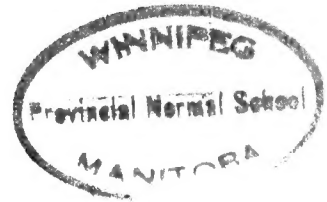
Canadian Social Studies Unit Readers

ADVENTURERS OF ENGLAND  
ON  
HUDSON RAY

By

AILEEN GARLAND

*Principal, William Whyte School, Winnipeg*



Illustrated by

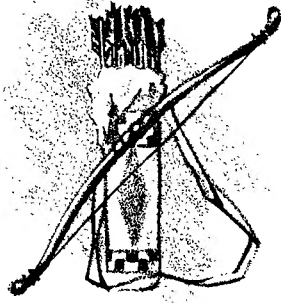
John E. Sinclair

*Copyright 1943 by*

THE COPP CLARK CO. LIMITED  
TORONTO CANADA







## The Boy, Pierre Radisson

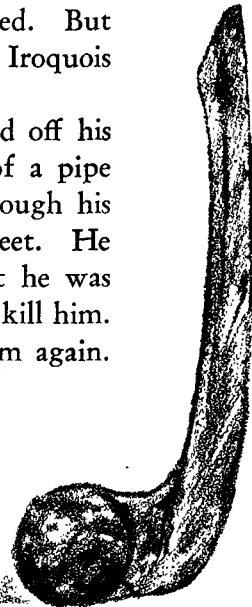
One day many years ago, three French-Canadian boys of the little village of Three Rivers went into the forest to hunt. They had been warned not to go far from the village for fear they might meet unfriendly Indians. But it was a fine sunny day, and they were eager to bring home some game to show their friends what good hunters they were. They strayed beyond safety, and two of the boys were killed by the Indians; the other, *Pierre Radisson*, was taken captive.

Usually the Indians tortured their prisoners and put them to death. But for some reason they did not torture Pierre. An Iroquois family adopted him. The Indian warrior and his squaw called him their son. The boys and girls of the family called him their brother.

Pierre lived with the Iroquois a long time. He learned how they hunted, how they travelled, how they made war. He learned to understand and to speak their language. After he had lived with them for more than a year he escaped. But before he was able to reach the French settlement, the Iroquois captured him again!

This time the Indians tortured Pierre. They pulled off his fingernails. They pressed his thumb into the bowl of a pipe full of burning tobacco. They ran a hot sword through his feet and put burning coals against the soles of his feet. He tried to be brave, for he knew that if they thought he was afraid, they would be even more cruel. They did not kill him. The Iroquois family which had adopted him saved him again.

**INDIAN WAR CLUB  
MADE OF A SINGLE PIECE  
OF HARD MAPLE WITH A  
KNOT FOR THE HEAD · OFTEN  
CALLED A TOMAHAWK...**



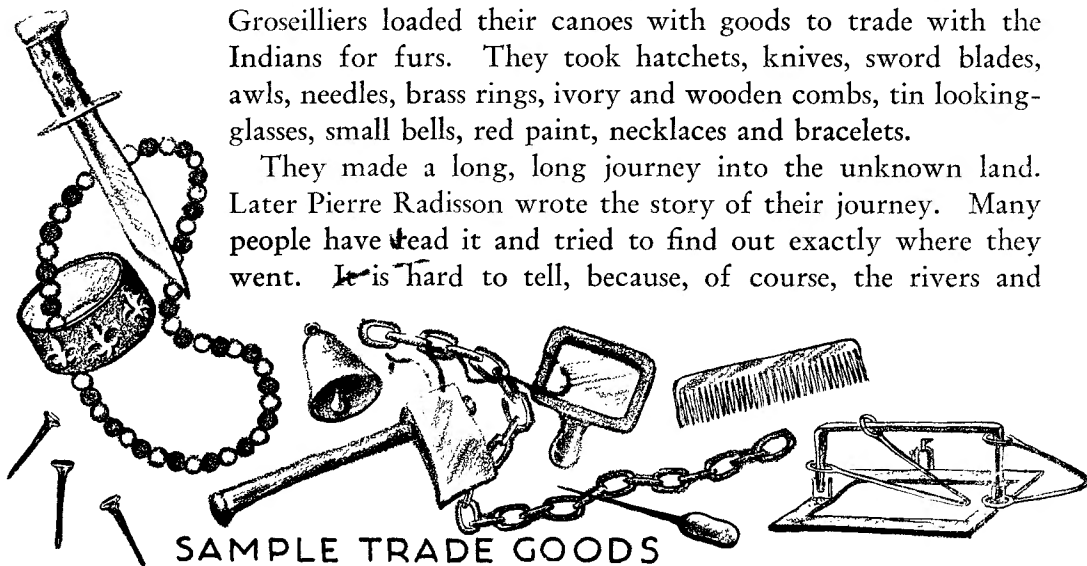


Once more he escaped, and at last succeeded in reaching his home in New France safely. You can imagine how happy his friends and relatives were to see him again. They thought he had been killed by the Indians.

Pierre's sister had married a fur trader named *Médard Chouart des Groseilliers*, which means Médard Chouart of the Gooseberry Patch. The English, who found his name hard to pronounce, called him Mister Gooseberry. Pierre told his friends about his life with the Indians. He told them about the furs they might get if they dared to go up into the Indian country. Groseilliers decided to go with the young Pierre to trade for furs.

In the spring Pierre Radisson and Médard Chouart des Groseilliers loaded their canoes with goods to trade with the Indians for furs. They took hatchets, knives, sword blades, awls, needles, brass rings, ivory and wooden combs, tin looking-glasses, small bells, red paint, necklaces and bracelets.

They made a long, long journey into the unknown land. Later Pierre Radisson wrote the story of their journey. Many people have read it and tried to find out exactly where they went. It is hard to tell, because, of course, the rivers and



SAMPLE TRADE GOODS

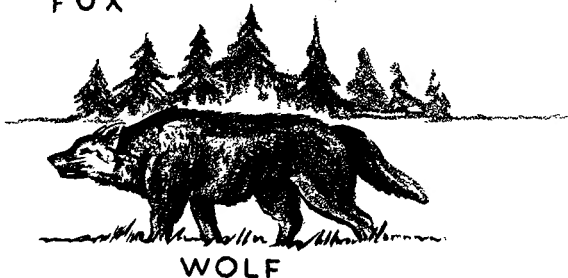
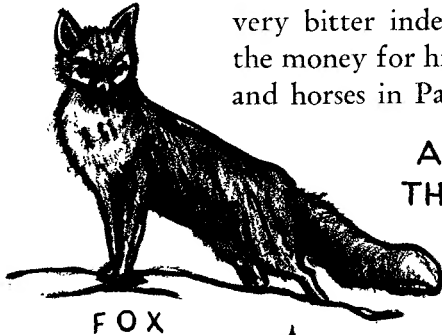
lakes on which they travelled did not have the names they have to-day. Also, it was a long time after their journey that Radisson wrote his story, and he may have forgotten some of the places they visited and how long it took them to go there. He wrote his story in English for the English king to read, and his spelling was so poor that it is sometimes hard to make out what he was trying to say.

However, most of the scholars who have studied his story believe that he went up the Ottawa River, across to Lake Huron, into Lake Michigan, out into the country which lies West of Lake Michigan, back into Lake Superior, and along its shores. There he heard from the Indians about the "Salt Water" which was several days' journey north of Lake Superior. This "Salt Water" was James Bay.

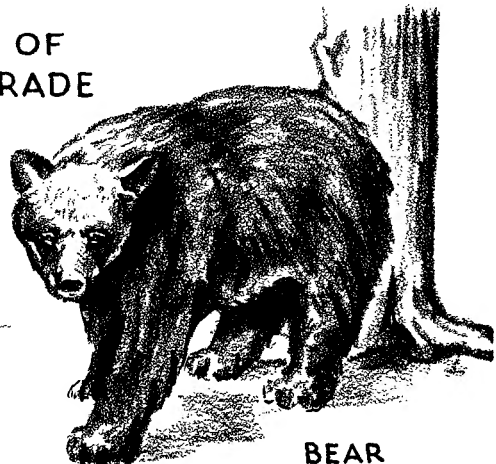
The animals that live in the cold north grow better fur than do the animals in the south. So the furs that Pierre Radisson and Groseilliers got around Lake Superior were very good. The hair was long and thick. After they had been travelling and trading for two years they returned to New France with a very fine cargo of furs.



After this successful expedition, they wanted to try their luck again. They asked the Governor of New France for permission to go among the Indians and trade for furs. The Governor knew that they had made a lot of money out of their first trip. He thought, "Why shouldn't I make something for myself out of this fur trade?" He suggested that he send two of his men with them and share the profits. This made Radisson and Groseilliers very angry. They had begun this fur trade in the West; they would do the work; why should they share the profits? One night they stole away without the Governor's men and without the Governor's permission.



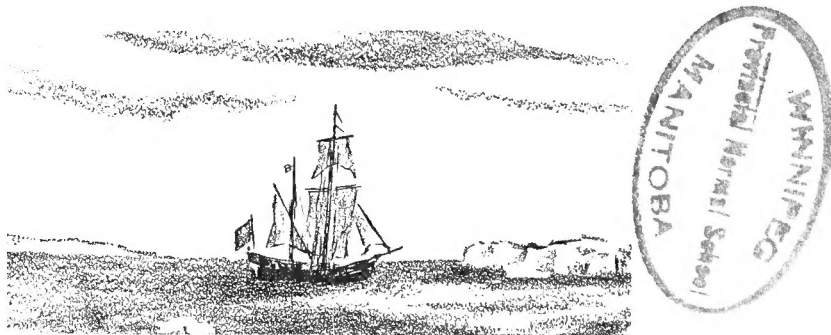
### ANIMALS OF THE FUR TRADE



They went up the Ottawa River again and crossed over to the Great Lakes. It is thought that this time they travelled north of Lake Superior to Lake Nipigon and from there to the "Salt Water" of James Bay. They were not the first white men to reach Hudson Bay and James Bay. Other explorers had gone in by ship through Hudson Strait. But Radisson and Groseilliers were the first to reach it by land.

Again they brought back a rich cargo of fine furs. They thought they were rich men. But the Governor was furious because they had refused to share the profits with him and because they had gone without his permission. He seized their furs and kept most of them. The two fur traders now felt very bitter indeed. They said that the Governor was taking the money for himself "that he might better maintain his coach and horses in Paris".





## By Ship To Hudson Bay

Radisson and Groseilliers decided to try to find some rich men who would invest enough money to provide ships for them to go to James Bay by a sea route. If they could go by sea, they would not have to deal with the Governor of New France. They hoped that there might be some Englishmen who would invest the money.

It took a long time to find men who were willing to invest enough money for this venture. The risks were great. The ship might be lost at sea or taken by pirates. The captain might not find James Bay. The traders might be attacked by the French or by the Indians. And some Englishmen wondered whether it was safe to trust the word of these two Frenchmen.

At last Prince Rupert, cousin of King Charles II of England, became interested. In the year 1668 Prince Rupert and some of his friends helped Radisson and Groseilliers to fit out two ships to trade along the shores of Hudson Bay. Radisson sailed on the *Eaglet*, and Groseilliers on the *Nonsuch*.

The traders were told to trade for furs, to search for valuable minerals such as gold, silver, and copper, and to try to find the North-west Passage to Asia.

When Columbus discovered America, you will remember that he was really searching for a way to Asia shorter than the route around the south of Africa, and safer than the one through the Mediterranean and then overland through the country of the Turks. By this time a Spanish sailor, named Magellan, had sailed from Spain around the southern end of

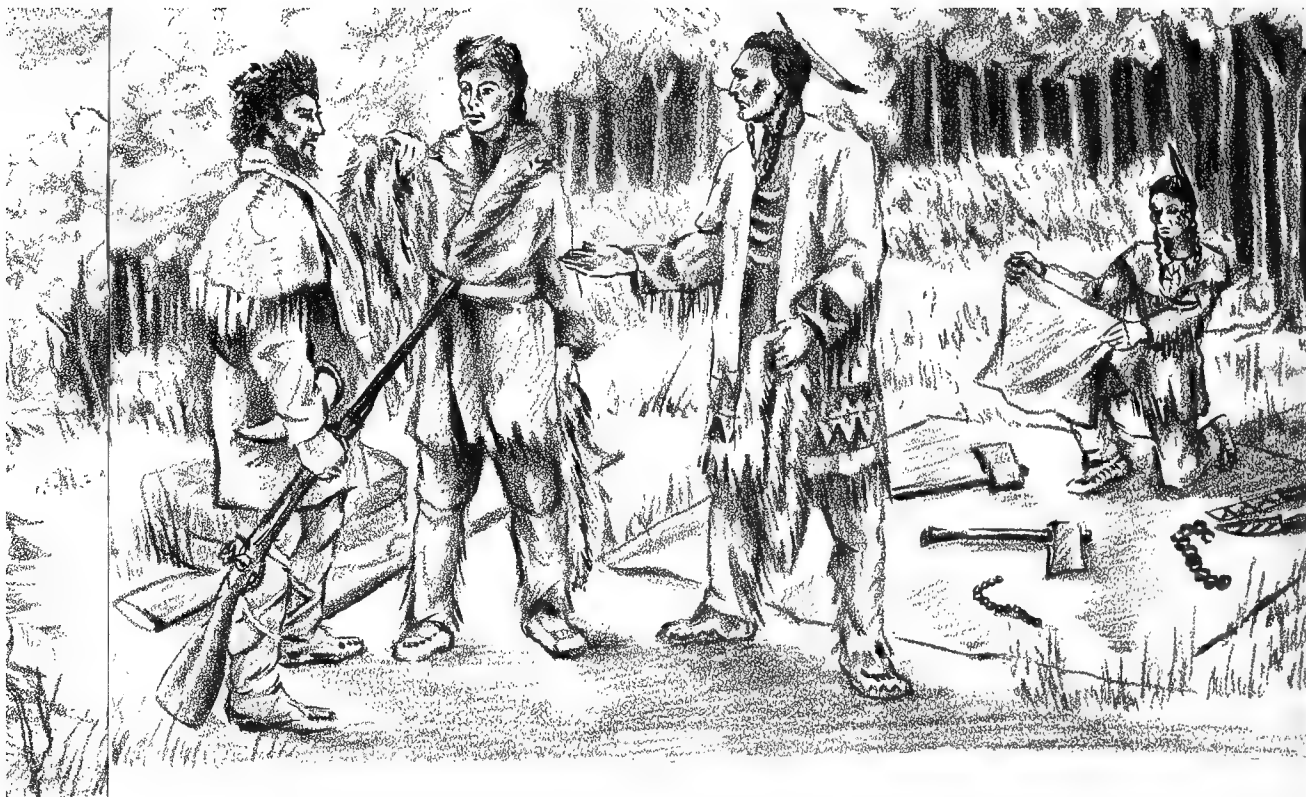


South America, and had reached Asia by that route. But that was a very long voyage, too.

For many years people believed that there must be a shorter passage to Asia through the Arctic Sea. We know to-day that there is too much ice there for a good sea route, but many brave men gave their lives trying to find the North-west Passage to Asia through the Arctic. Every fur-trading party that went out to the North or to the West hoped to find it or to find out something about it.

Pierre Radisson had bad luck on his first expedition from England. There was a great storm at sea, and the *Eaglet* was damaged. It had to turn back to England.

Groseilliers and the men on board the *Nonsuch* reached James Bay safely. There they built Fort Charles on the Rupert River. They called their fort after King Charles II of England and the



river after his cousin Prince Rupert, who had helped them find the money for the expedition. *The Hudson's Bay Company* still has a fort there. They call it "Rupert's House" to-day.

It was very cold at Fort Charles. The Englishmen were not used to such cold weather. The captain said, "All the world seemed frozen into death."

But the Indians were willing to trade and they had plenty of beaver skins. They wanted the hatchets, the knives, and the brass kettles which the white men had. Above all, they wanted the guns, the powder, and the shot. They said, "The true means to get victory is to have a thunder." "Thunder" was the word they used for "gun".

In the summer the *Nonsuch* sailed back to England with a fine cargo of beaver skins.



## The Charter

Radisson and Groseilliers had proved that money could be made trading for furs in Hudson Bay. On May 2, 1670, King Charles II granted a charter to *The Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay*. That is the formal title of the company which we know as *The Hudson's Bay Company*. And from that day to this, the Company has been trading with the Indians at its posts on Hudson Bay.

A charter is a paper signed by a king giving a group of people certain rights. This charter gave the Hudson's Bay Company very great power, probably more than either the King or the Company realized at the time. It gave them full control of the fur trade with the Indians in all the country drained by all the rivers that flow into Hudson Bay. Now that is a very large part of Canada. It takes in the north-western part of Quebec, a large part of Northern Ontario, all of Manitoba, most of Saskatchewan, and about half of Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

According to the Charter, no other subjects of the King of England were allowed to trade there. If the subjects of any

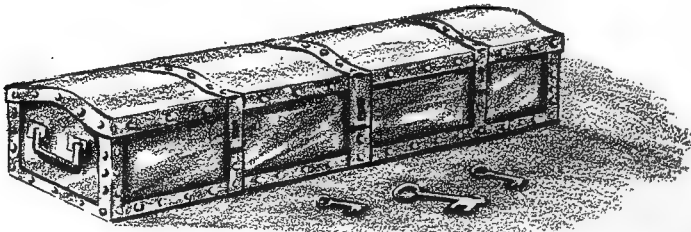
other king tried to break in on the trade, the Hudson's Bay Company might fight them and try to drive them away. Sometimes the King of England would send help to his subjects.

The Charter also gave them control of the fisheries, and of all the minerals, gold, silver, and copper, found in that country. The Company was also given the right to make laws, not only for its own servants, but also for all the inhabitants of the area under its control.

In return for all these rights, the Charter stated that the Company was to pay to the King or his heirs "two elks and two black beavers whensoever and as often as We, Our Heirs, and Successors shall happen to enter the said country".

Only once has a reigning king of Great Britain come to Canada. That was in May, 1939, when King George VI and Queen Elizabeth came. A platform was built beside the gate of Old Fort Garry in Winnipeg. There the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company presented to His Majesty the two elk heads and the two black beaver skins required by the Charter.

The Charter was put very carefully into an iron chest with one great lock and two smaller locks. The Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company had the great key for the great lock, and two other members of the Committee of the Company had the two smaller keys for the smaller locks. The Charter could be taken out of the iron chest only by order of the Committee. It had to be taken out sometimes when other merchants were questioning the rights and powers of the Hudson's Bay Company. The rest of the time it was kept carefully locked in the chest, for it was very valuable.









"SKIN FOR SKIN"  
THE COAT-OF-ARMS  
OF THE HUDSON'S  
BAY COMPANY

## Establishment of Trading Posts

The Hudson's Bay Company soon found that it would pay them to have several trading posts instead of just the one at Fort Charles. All travelling on the rivers of the north country in those days was by canoe. Therefore the traders built their posts at the mouths of the rivers and sent word to the Indians to bring their furs down to the posts.

They built another post, which they called Moose Factory, at the mouth of the Moose River. Then they built Fort Albany at the mouth of the Albany River, New Severn House at the mouth of the Severn River, and York Factory between the mouth of the Hayes River and the mouth of the Nelson. York Factory is now called Port Nelson.

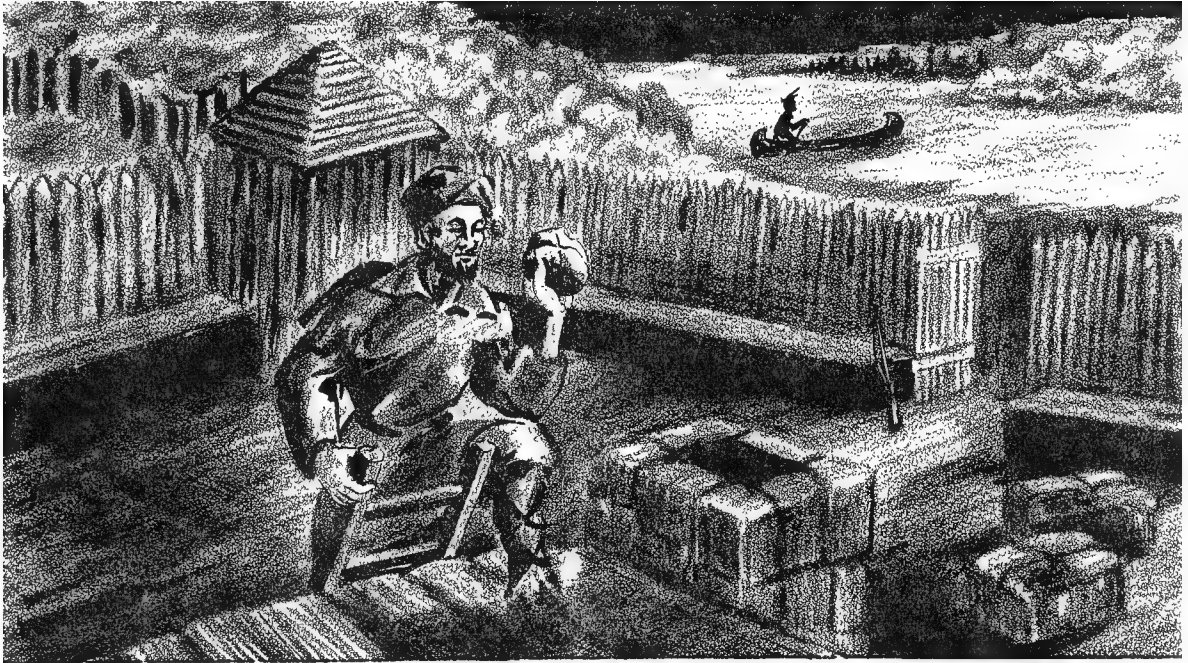
Later they built Fort Churchill at the mouth of the Churchill River. It was called after John Churchill, a great soldier, who later became the Duke of Marlborough. He was Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company for seven years. Winston Churchill is a descendant of this John Churchill.

Although the trading posts were called forts, they did not always have stone walls or powerful guns to defend them. Some of them were only log buildings with good strong doors which could be closed against the Indians if there was any sign of trouble.

Some of the forts were built in a hollow square, with taller parts standing out at the corners. These parts at the corners were called bastions. Some forts might have bastions at all



AN EARLY TYPE OF TRADING  
POST · WITHOUT PALISADE



four corners; some had them at only two corners. Men on guard in the bastions could watch the walls and could shoot at any Indians or French who might be trying to break into the fort.

Often there was a palisade around the building. This palisade was a fence about fifteen feet high, made of logs or slabs stuck into the ground. At the gate of the palisade, a man stayed on guard whenever the Factor thought there might be danger from the Indians or from the French. The Factor was the man in charge of the trading post.

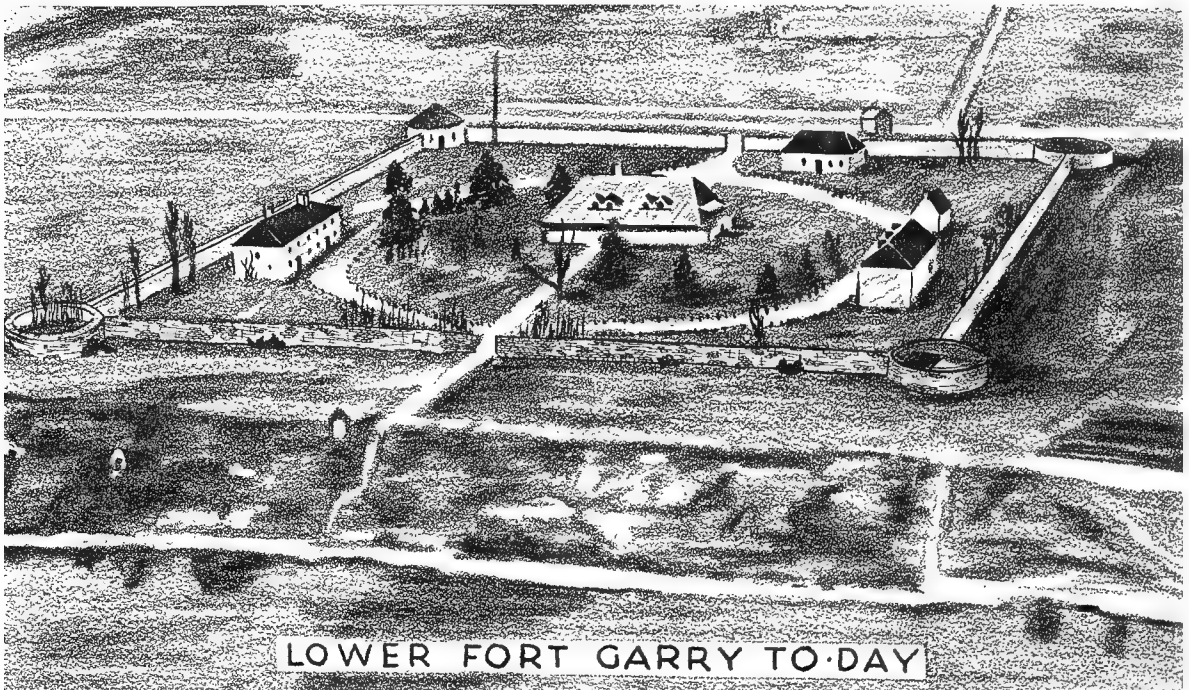
Naturally the French were not willing that a British Company should control this great area and this rich trade with the Indians. Whenever France and Britain were at war, and sometimes when the mother countries were not at war, the French attacked the posts on the Bay.

Sometimes they captured them easily, for the men in charge did not always know that war had been declared between their countries. One night at Fort Charles the men were sleeping

soundly when a bomb came down the chimney and exploded. Fortunately it was a small bomb, not so powerful as our modern bombs. No one had been on guard. A ladder had been left standing by the building. A Frenchman climbed up the ladder, and threw the bomb down the chimney. The Englishmen should have kept better watch, but, because they had been safe for a long time, they had become careless.

Whenever the French captured the forts, the British sent expeditions to take them back again. There were many battles on the Bay in the first thirty years of the Company's history there. At one time the French held all the forts but one. Then France and Britain made a treaty in 1713 which said that the territory around Hudson Bay was to belong to Britain. And it has been a part of the British Empire from that day to this.

During the years when France and Britain were at war, the Company lost money. But the men who had provided the money for the first voyage to Hudson Bay had made good profits before the wars began and they made good profits again after the wars were over.



LOWER FORT GARRY TO-DAY



## Henry Kelsey

Ambitious and adventure-loving boys from Great Britain enlisted in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. They thought it would be exciting to go to sea, to sail through the ice-bergs of the frozen north, to hunt for deer and moose and wild duck, to trade with the Indians, and perhaps to fight with the French.

The Company took only strong and brave boys, for the North is no place for weaklings. There were many hardships and dangers to face. Sometimes there were great storms at sea. Sometimes the ships were caught in the ice. Sometimes a ship and its crew disappeared and were never heard of again.

Some of the governors were very stern and strict with the boys. The work was not easy. If the hunting was bad, they might run short of food at the posts. The winters were long and cold. The summers were short and hot. In summer there were great clouds of flies and mosquitoes. The Indians were not always friendly, and they were always very dirty.

But life on Hudson Bay promised adventure, and there were always boys ready to go if they could get the chance.

Henry Kelsey was only fourteen years old when he left home to go to York Factory at the mouth of the Nelson River. When he was only seventeen, the Factor sent him with an Indian boy,



Thomas Savage, two hundred miles along the coast to carry some letters to New Severn House. The Factor had sent four grown Indians with the letters, but they had turned back without delivering them. Kelsey and the Indian boy were back within a month with the answers to the letters.

The governors of the Company in England were pleased when they learned about this journey of Kelsey's. They wrote to the Factor commanding that "the boy, Henry Kelsey be sent to the Churchill River with Thomas Savage because we are informed he is a very active lad delighting much in Indian company, being never better pleased than when he is travelling with them".

When Henry Kelsey was twenty, he was sent inland to the country of the Assiniboine Indians. He paddled up the Hayes River and travelled through parts of what we now know as Manitoba and Saskatchewan. He kept a Journal of his expedition. Part of it he wrote in rhyme. It begins:

"In sixteen hundred and ninety'th year  
I set forth as plainly may appear  
And for my master's interest I did soon  
Set from the House the twelfth of June  
Then up the river I with heavy heart  
Did take my way and from all English part  
To live among the natives of this place  
If God permits for one two years space.  
The inland country of good report hath been  
By Indians but by English yet not seen."

Kelsey stayed for a time at a place which he called Deering's Point. Historians have read his Journal very carefully to try

to find out just where he went. As with Radisson's Journal, it is not easy to be certain. He says:

"At Deering's Point after the frost  
I set up there a certain cross  
In token of my being there  
Cut out on it the date of the year  
And likewise for to verify the same  
Added to it my master Sir Edward Deering's name."

Many people believe that Deering's Point was where the city of The Pas now stands. If we could find the cross that Kelsey set up we would be sure. But probably it fell down long ago and was buried by the leaves and has long since rotted away.

After two years' time, Henry Kelsey returned to York Factory. In all this time he had not seen another white man. He had lived alone with the Indians. He had feasted with them, smoked the pipe of peace with them, made speeches to them, given them presents and received in return gifts of furs. He had tried to persuade them to stop fighting with each other.





He told them to bring their furs to the forts on the Bay, and he promised that they would get good things in return.

Henry Kelsey was the first white man to travel up the Saskatchewan River and visit the Indians on the prairies. He was the first white man to see the great herds of buffalo on the plains.

He thought that the Company would get along better with the Indians if more of its men could speak the Indian language. He prepared a dictionary of the words a white trader should know. The governors of the Hudson's Bay Company in England sent out this note: "We have sent you your dictionary printed that you may better instruct the young lads with you in the Indian language."

Later, Henry Kelsey rose to be Factor in charge of York Factory, to which he had come as a young lad. Such was the career of one of the boys who came out from England in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company.

## Relations With The Indians

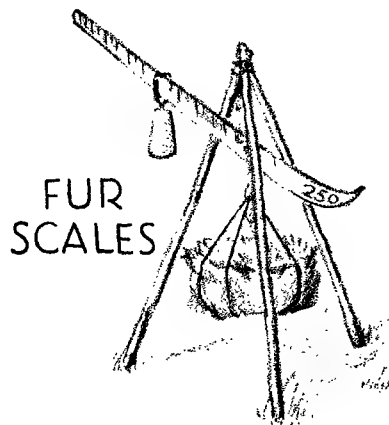
The traders did not have much trouble with the Indians. They wanted furs. The Indians wanted guns, powder, kettles, beads, hatchets, and cloth. They all knew that it was wise for them to try to get along without fighting. The Factors were kind to the Indians but they were very firm whenever there was any sign of trouble.

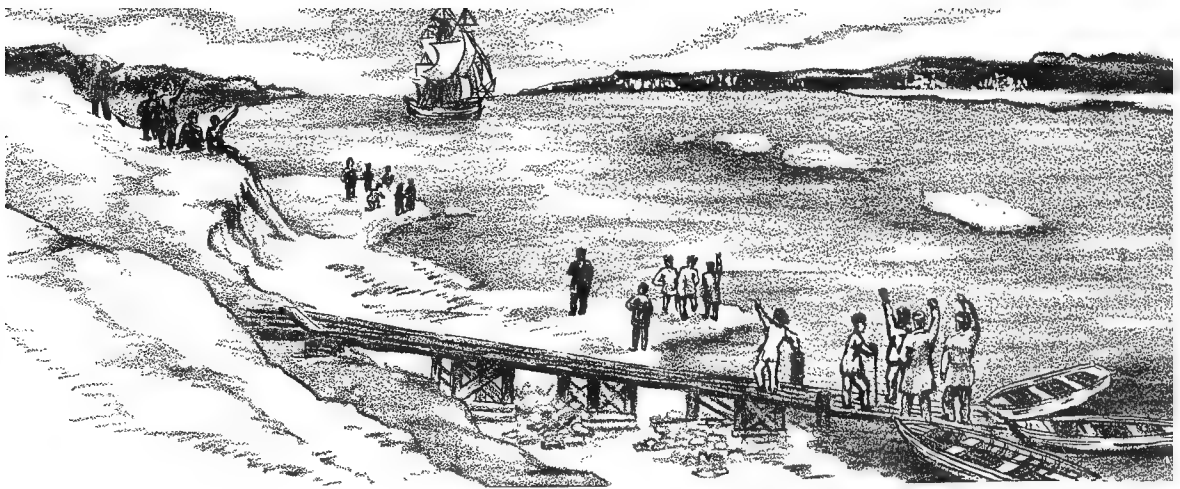
During the first seventy years of trade on the Bay, not a single Englishman was struck down by an Indian, and no Indian was insulted by a white man.

Once, early in the history of the Company, the traders came very close to trouble with the Indians. Each time the Indians came to the post the Governor urged them to come again next year and to bring many furs. He always told them that he would have plenty of goods to trade for the furs.

These goods came from England by sailing ship once a year. In the year 1715 the ship did not come. The captain came within sight of the fort and turned back because he was afraid he could not land. He was neither a good sailor nor a brave man. He took the cargo back to England, and left the traders without the goods they needed for the trade with the Indians, and without supplies of food for winter.

This cowardly action made it very hard for the traders at York Factory. When the Factor learned next year what the captain had done he was very angry. He declared that if the





captain had let the ship drift with the tide it would have come in safely.

That spring, when the Indians came to trade the governor had very little to give them. The Indians needed the guns and the ammunition which they had expected to get at the post. Without them they would not be able to hunt successfully for food on their way back to their homes. They were very angry when they found that the white men had so little to give them. The white men were afraid that the Indians would attack the post and they watched carefully day and night.

The governor tried to be fair. He divided all he could spare among the Indians—one gun to every ten canoes—so much powder to every ten canoes. He did his best, but when the Indians came back next year, they told him that many of their people had died of starvation on the way home, because the white men had not been able to give them guns and powder.

By January the traders had used all their flour. They had very little food of any kind left. To keep from starving they had to hunt carefully for caribou and geese, rabbits and partridges. Next year the ship came and they had plenty of supplies for the winter and plenty of goods to trade with the Indians.





## PEACE PIPE OF PLAINS INDIANS

### Trading With The Indians

When the Indians came to the post, they did not expect to hand in their furs and receive their goods right away. Presents were exchanged, speeches were made, and the Company gave the Indians a feast. It took a long time to do the family shopping in those days. Since they did it only once a year, they could afford to take a long time.

As they were paddling down the river, just before they reached the post, the chief would command the Indians to fire their guns. This was their way of greeting the white man. When the Factor heard them, he ordered his men at the fort to fire off guns in reply. If they had any cannon, they fired a round from them too, in honour of the arrival of the Indians.

The Company supplied the chief and his second in command with special costumes when they visited the fort. They gave the chief a red or blue coat with fancy cuffs. They also gave him a hat, a shirt, a silk handkerchief to tie around his neck, and a pair of stockings, usually one red and one blue. The hat was very elaborate; it had three feathers, usually of three different colours. When the chief put on all these gifts, he looked very handsome, and he felt very happy.

The second in command did not get such elaborate presents. He got a coat, but not such a fine one, and a cap like a sailor's cap. But he felt very important in the clothes which the white man had given him.

When the two leaders were dressed in all this finery, they came up to the fort with a few of the best hunters of their



tribe. The Factor welcomed them formally. The chief would tell the Factor how many men and how many canoes he had brought and what fine furs he had. The Factor would say that he was happy to see the Indians and that he had plenty of good things for them.

The Indians then gave the Factor a present of fine beaver skins. They expected some fine presents in return and, of course, they always got them.

After they had spread out the presents of beaver skins, the Indians placed the calumet, or peace pipe, on the best of the skins. This was a pipe made of stone, with a stem three or four feet long and sometimes even longer. They filled it with tobacco mixed with herbs.

When the pipe had been lighted, the Factor took it in both hands. He stood up and very gravely pointed the end of the stem to the east, then straight up to the sky, then to the west, then down to the ground. He took three or four puffs. Then he handed it to the Indian chief. After the chief had taken three or four puffs, he handed it to the other Indians and they each took a few puffs.

This was a very serious and important ceremony. By pointing the stem of the pipe to the east, to the sky, to the west, and to the ground, they meant that as long as the sun should visit the different parts of the world, and make day and night, there would be peace and friendship and love between the Indians and the white men. After they had all had a few puffs and the pipe was smoked out, the Factor took it again, twirled it three or four times over his head and then laid it upon the table. That meant that the friendship was to be not only for those who were there that day, but for all the people of their tribes and for all the British. Then the Indians all thanked the Factor by shouting, "Ho!"

The leader of the Indians usually made a speech. One trader copied down a speech which a chief made. This is what he said:

"You told me last year to bring many Indians to trade which I promised to do. You see I have not lied. Here are many young men come with me.

"Use them kindly, I say. Use them kindly. Let them trade good goods, I say.

"We lived hard last winter and hungry, the powder being short measure and bad; being short measure and bad, I say. Tell your servants to fill the measure and not to put their thumbs within the brim.

"Take pity on us. Take pity on us, I say. We paddle a long way to see you. The French send for us but we will not hear them. We love the English.

"Let us trade good black tobacco, moist and hard twisted. Let us see it before it is opened.

"Take pity on us, I say. The guns are bad. Let us trade light guns, small in the hand, and well shaped, and with locks that will not freeze in the winter, and red gun cases.

"Let the young men have more than the measure of tobacco; cheap kettles, thick and high, and with strong ears.

"Give us good measure of cloth. Let us see the old measure. The young men love you, by coming so far to see you. Take pity, take pity, I say. Give them good goods. They like to dress and be fine. Do you understand me?"

After the smoking of the pipe and the speeches, the Indians gathered outside the fort. The Factor gave them a feast. Sometimes it was oatmeal, sometimes it was a dish of peas. Sometimes he gave them a drink of rum. He might also give them some prunes or raisins. The Indians were very fond of prunes and raisins.



The Indians might stay and feast for one day or they might stay longer. After the feasting, the trading began. Only the men of the Company who had reached the rank of Trader were allowed to trade with the Indians. The other servants of the Company were commanded to stay inside the fort, when the Indians were there, except when the Factor gave them permission to go out. The Factor did not always make them obey this rule, and sometimes some of them succeeded in getting out and making friends with the Indians.

The Indians brought their furs to the fort. While the trading was going on, the traders allowed only three or four Indians inside the stockade at a time. In this way they avoided trouble. At trading times there were always more Indians than white men at the Fort, and if they had all been allowed to come in, they might have decided to take whatever they wanted.

As each Indian handed in his furs, he was given a number of little sticks to show how much he had brought and how much he could expect to buy. They used these little sticks instead of money. Everything was valued at so many "beavers". A gun might be worth from eight to twelve beavers. For one beaver skin an Indian could get a hatchet, or half a pound of







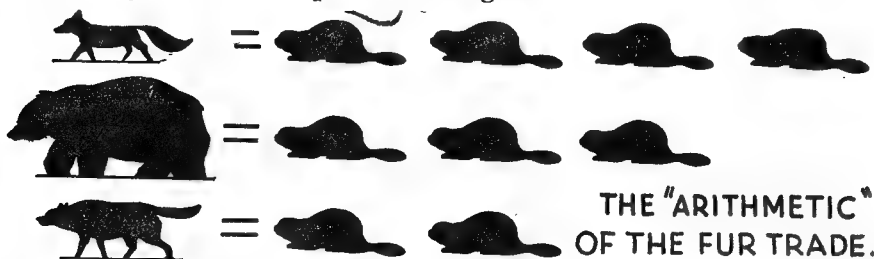
beads, or six thimbles. They bought brass kettles at one beaver for each pound the kettle weighed.

The Indians brought other furs besides beaver skins. But every skin had its value in beavers. A black fox skin was worth four beavers; a full grown bear skin was worth three beavers; a wolf or a wolverine was worth two. It took two martens or six muskrat skins to equal one beaver. Ten pounds of goose feathers also counted as one beaver.

After the Indians had handed in all their furs and had received all their little sticks, they decided what they wanted in return. The traders gave them guns and powder, hatchets and knives, thimbles or beads, or looking glasses, or tobacco, or kettles, or cloth, or whatever they wanted. Then the Indians proudly took their purchases back to their camp to show them to their friends.

When the trading was all over, the chief said farewell to the Factor and the traders. The Factor invited him to come again next year and to bring many men and many canoes with him. He promised that he would have good goods to trade. After a few more polite speeches the Indians paddled away to their own country.

Then the men at the post worked at sorting the furs and packing them for shipment to England.





## Life In The Fort

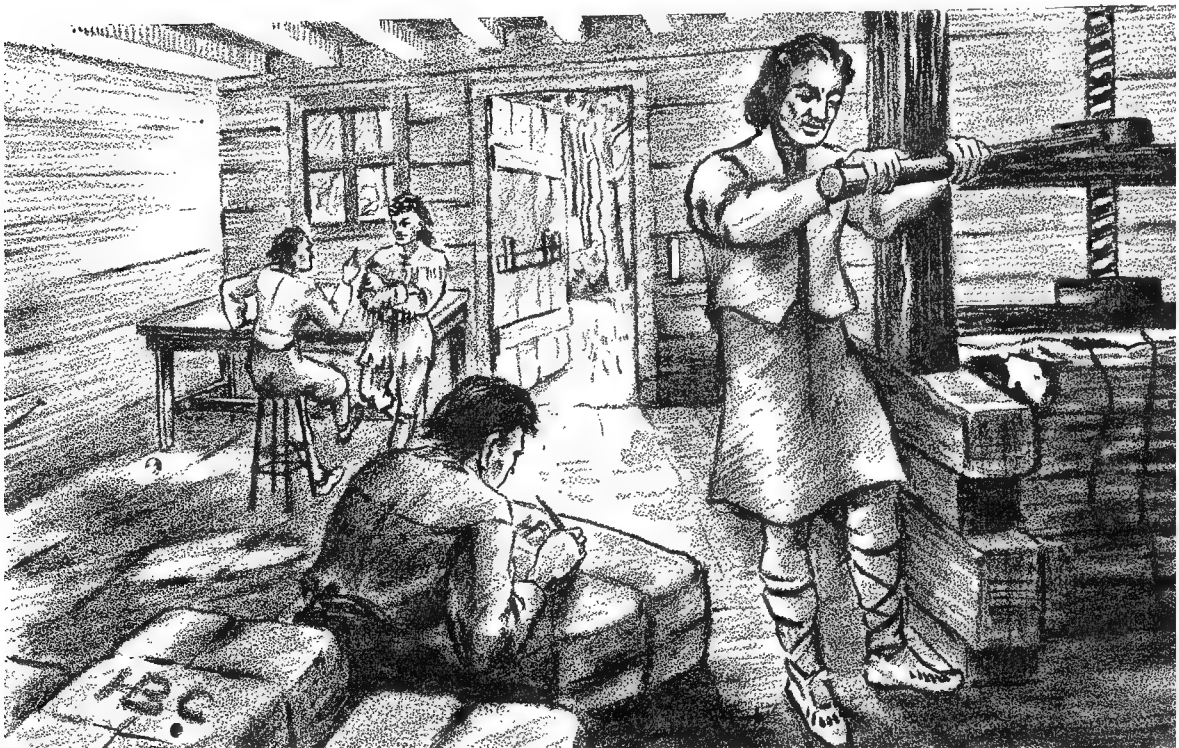
Although there was little fear of trouble with the Indians, the Company thought it was wise to have quite a few men at each post. If the Indians had thought that the white men were weak and could not defend themselves, there might have been trouble. York Factory usually had from twenty to thirty men stationed there.

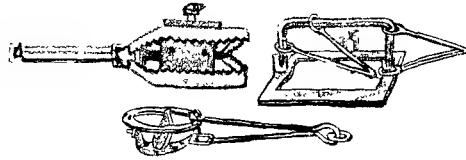
As we have already seen, the officer in charge of the post was called the *Factor*. He ruled over all the servants of the Company and over the neighbouring Indians. He sent reports to England when the ships went home, and he received orders from the Committee in England when the next ship came. Sometimes only one ship came in a year; later there were usually two. The Factor held a very important position, for he had to decide what should be done whenever difficulties arose. Sometimes he was very severe and made life unpleasant for the men under him, but usually he was just, even if he was stern. The Company always tried to send good men.

The *traders* were the men who dealt with the Indians whenever the natives came to the post. They had learned to understand and to speak a little of the Indian language. They told the Indians how much they would give them for their furs. The Company would not allow any other servants at the post to deal with the Indians, because they were afraid that the men might trade for furs on their own account, and cheat the Company out of its profit.

The *clerks* and *apprentice clerks* kept the accounts and looked after the goods in the storehouses. Boys of fourteen or fifteen were sent out as apprentices for periods of five or six years each. Henry Kelsey, you remember, was only fourteen when he came out as an apprentice. While he was still a young boy he did good work exploring. Later he became a trader and then *Factor* at York Factory.

Another boy who came out as apprentice was Richard Ballantyne. He was only sixteen when he came to York Factory. He loved adventure, and when he heard that he was to be an apprentice in the Hudson's Bay Company, he was delighted. When his six years as apprentice were over, he went back to England, and wrote a book about his experiences. He called it "Hudson Bay, or Every-Day Life in the Wilds". He did not come back to North America again. He stayed in England, where he became a writer of books for boys and girls. Many of these books tell about life in the North and about the fur trade.





SOME EARLY TYPES OF TRAPS

Ballantyne tells in his book about his work as an apprentice. The men had breakfast at nine o'clock in the winter, and worked at their desks until one, when they had dinner. Then they worked again till six o'clock, when they stopped for a short time for tea. After tea they went back to work again until eight o'clock. Richard Ballantyne was a lively boy, and he found that these long hours of copying and writing made him weary. In the evenings the young clerks might read books, or "kick up a row" in their living quarters which they called "Bachelor's Hall". Or they might go out on snowshoes to see whether they had been lucky enough to catch anything in the traps they had set. If they caught anything in their own traps, the Company sold the furs for them and gave them half the money. Wednesdays and Sundays were holidays when they were free to do what they liked. They often went hunting.

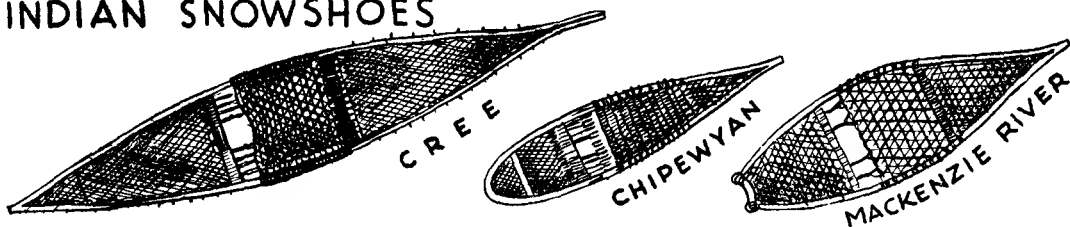
Usually at a large fort there was a *doctor* to look after the men. Sometimes the Indians, too, came to him for help and sometimes he was able to cure them.

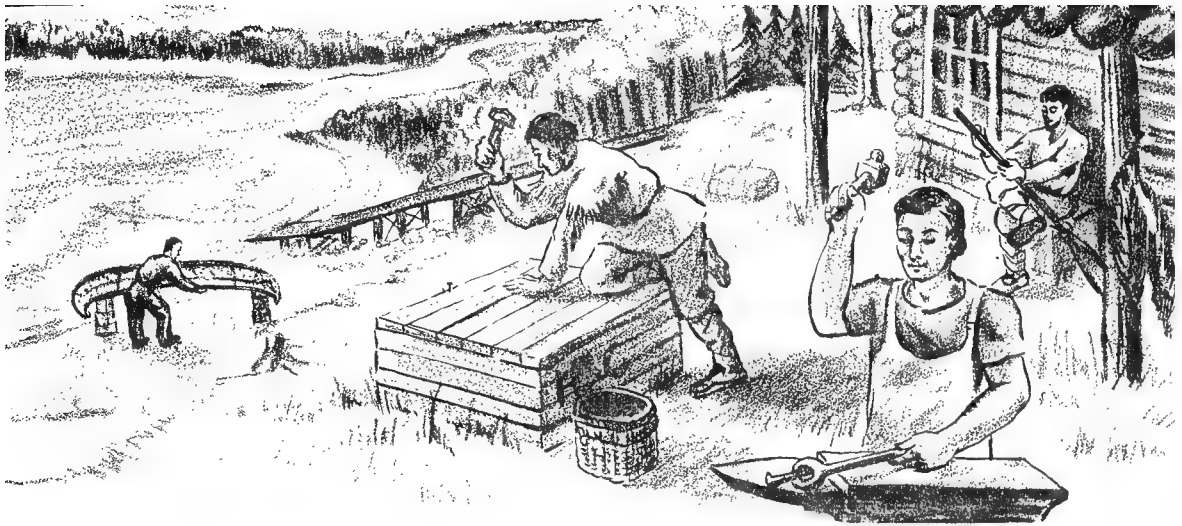
There were many other workmen at the posts. The *tailor* made caps and coats and suits for the men of the Company. He also made the fancy coats which they gave to the chiefs who came to trade. Sometimes the Indians who had had a good hunt could afford to buy some of the things the tailor had made.

The *blacksmith* made the nails and the hinges and the locks for the post. He also made hatchets, spear heads, and ice-chisels for the Indians.

The *gunsmith* repaired the guns. He often had to make a new part for a gun when some part had worn out. He also

## INDIAN SNOWSHOES





repaired free of charge any of the guns which had been sold to the Indians.

There was plenty of work for the *carpenter* to do, for besides doing any building that was needed at the post and repairing the furniture, he had to build and repair the boats.

The *bricklayer* made the stoves and the ovens, and plastered the walls of the buildings. He had to find limestone, make lime kilns, and burn the lime to make the plaster.

The *cooper* made wooden buckets and barrels for storing the geese and venison which were salted for winter use. He made the barrels and cases in which the furs were packed to be shipped to England.

Other men cut down trees and brought lumber and firewood to the post. At least one man at every post was needed to do the cooking.

Oats were sent out whole from England and ground into oatmeal as it was needed. At York Factory men were kept busy part of the time brewing beer. They made a special beer out of spruce trees which gave them the supply of Vitamin C which they needed. People who do not have enough Vitamin C get a disease called scurvy. We secure most of our

Vitamin C from fresh fruits and vegetables. There was very little scurvy among the men of the Hudson's Bay Company. In the winter they had spruce beer, and in the summer they had vegetable gardens from which they got a good supply of fresh vegetables. The summers are short on Hudson Bay but plants grow quickly there.

Hunting was one of the amusements which life on the Hudson Bay offered to young lads like Richard Ballantyne. They liked to hunt. It was a pleasant change after sitting at their desks all day. But it was more than an amusement. They needed the supplies of meat for the post. Sometimes the Factor would invite Indians to stay at the post to hunt for game in order that they would have enough fresh meat.

In the spring when the geese and the caribou were going north, and in the fall when they were going south, the men at the posts tried to get a good supply of meat. Sometimes they salted it and stored it away in what they called the "victual hole". If the weather was cold enough they froze it. Even in the dead of winter it was possible for good hunters to obtain partridges and rabbits.

The white men learned from the Indians to fish through the ice. At the posts on Hudson Bay they caught salmon and whitefish. In Lake Winnipeg and the other lakes they got sturgeon, whitefish, goldeye, jackfish and pike. Richard Ballantyne said that the whitefish at Norway House were the most "delicate and delicious" he ever ate.

Sometimes the traders bought food for the posts from the Indians. At one time they supplied them with powder and shot and allowed them the value of one beaver skin for every ten geese they brought. They also bought fresh and smoked fish from them. They ate the meat of the beaver. A full grown beaver weighed about fifty or sixty pounds. The meat



tasted something like pork. The tail was considered the best meat of the beaver. Buffalo tongues were the best part of the buffalo meat. The Company shipped some buffalo tongues to England and sent instructions as to how to prepare them. They were to be soaked in cold water from twenty to thirty hours and then boiled.

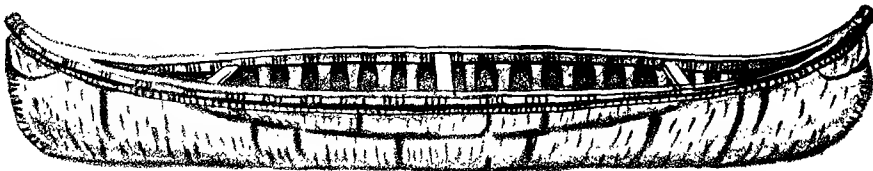
From England the ships brought out supplies of flour, sugar, butter, rice, tea, chocolate, raisins, pepper, and mustard, for the posts. The men had plenty to eat unless the ship failed to come or the hunting was bad.

## Learning From The Indians

For many years after the building of the posts on Hudson Bay, the traders were content to stay in the posts and wait for the Indians to come to them. It was over sixty years after Kelsey's trip into the interior before the Company sent another man up the rivers to urge the Indians to come down to trade. When the French began to send traders into the West by way of the Great Lakes and the Grand Portage, the Company realized that it, too, must send men inland to trade with Indians or else lose the trade to the French.

While the traders lived in the posts on the Bay, they depended for supplies partly on hunting and fishing, but chiefly on the cargoes brought from England in the Company's ships. When they began to travel inland, they had to learn from the Indians how to live and travel in the Indian country.

From the Indians the white men got the light birchbark canoes which they needed for travel on the rivers. The canoes had to be light. There were many places where they had to be carried past rapids which were so swift that the men could not



BIRCH BARK CANOE

paddle against them. Sometimes they had to be carried from one river to another. These places over which the canoes had to be carried were called *portages*. This is a word which comes from the French word *porter* which means *to carry*. The wooden boats which the carpenters built at the posts would have been much too heavy to carry over the portages.

The white men learned from the Indians where there was good fishing and how to catch the fish. They learned where to find the wild rice in the marshes and how to gather it. The Indians used to paddle in among the rice stalks, bring the heads of the stalks over the canoe, and beat the grain off into the canoe. The Indians taught the traders to make soup of a moss which grew on the rocks of the barren northlands. It was not very good soup, but if they had no other food, it would keep them from starving.

The Indians showed the white men where the moose might be found and how to track them. They showed them how to hunt the buffalo and they taught them where the buffalo came at certain seasons of the year. They taught them to make *pemmican* from the buffalo meat.

Pemmican is very nourishing and it will keep for a long time. When the traders arranged provisions for a trip, they provided, for each man, eight pounds of fresh meat a day, or three pounds of dry meat, or two and a half pounds of pemmican. That shows how nourishing they considered the pemmican. Because it kept so well and they wanted to carry as little weight as possible on their trips, they used pemmican more than any other form of meat.

Would you like to know how they made the pemmican? They cut the buffalo meat into strips and dried it. Then they



MAKING "PEMMICAN"



pounded it into shreds. Next they added Saskatoon berries, or raisins, if they had any, and sometimes a little sugar, and mixed it with plenty of melted fat. They tied it up in a bag of buffalo skin.

When they were travelling, they often ate the pemmican without cooking it. If they had time to have a fire, they might mix it with a little flour and water and boil it. When they prepared it that way, they called it *robbiboo*. Sometimes they fried it, and then they called it *richeau*.

Richard Ballantyne ate pemmican when he was travelling from post to post. He said it was good wholesome food but he thought it did not look very nice. He also objected to the buffalo hairs which had got into it because of the carelessness of the people who made it. "However," he said, "after a time, one becomes accustomed to these little peculiarities."

## Changes

As time went on the Hudson's Bay Company built many more posts. They now have two hundred in Canada and Labrador.

They built posts throughout the prairie, in what are now Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. They built posts on the Pacific coast, in northern Quebec, in northern Ontario, and

in Labrador. They built posts in the northern country known as the Northwest Territories. They built posts on the shores of the Arctic and on the islands in the Arctic. Arctic Bay on Baffin Island is the furthest north. It is only twelve hundred miles from the North Pole!

If it were not for the radio some of the posts would still be very much cut off from the rest of the world. They have very few visitors. Perhaps a wandering priest, or an explorer, or a scientist in search of information, or a Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman may visit them from time to time. But it is very seldom that the men at the more remote posts have any company other than the Indians or Eskimos who come to trade. Once a week the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation presents a programme called "The Northern Messenger". At this time people in the settled parts of Canada may send radio messages to their friends and relatives in the North.

For over two hundred years trade went on in much the same way, but in the last twenty-five years many changes have taken place. Gasoline motor boats travel quickly up and down the rivers where formerly canoes were the only traffic. Aeroplanes take in the mail and supplies and take the furs away from many of the posts. But there are still some posts where conditions are much as they were two hundred years ago, where dog-teams and canoes are the chief means of transportation, and mail comes only once a year.

